



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY  
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Mr Ed Cocks MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Natural  
Gas Transition) Amendment Bill 2022

**Submission Number: 5**

**Date Authorised for Publication: 6 September 2022**



**Weston Creek Community Council Comments for the:**

**Inquiry into Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction  
(Natural Gas Transition) Amendment Bill 2022**

Submissions close 30 AUGUST 2022

Your local voice



[www.westoncreek.org.au](http://www.westoncreek.org.au)

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## **ABOUT WESTON CREEK COMMUNITY COUNCIL (WCCC)**

Weston Creek Community Council (WCCC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the *Inquiry into Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Natural Gas Transition) Amendment Bill 2022*.

As a Community Council we are committed to advocating and supporting the Weston Creek residents in pursuing the expectations and values that enhance and ensure their safety, well-being, and quality lifestyles. The community of Weston Creek value their unique village atmosphere, garden landscapes, and open green spaces as vital links to physical and mental well-being. Planning and development, climate change and climate mitigation, community preparedness for climate change impacts, and Government distribution of amenities and resources are seen as high value priorities to the residents in Weston Creek.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Council notes the following from the media release of 12 August 2022:

*The Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity has announced it will be undertaking an inquiry into the new Gas Bill.*

*The Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Natural Gas Transition) Amendment Bill 2022 was presented by the Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction on 4 August 2022. It proposes to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas by amending the Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act 2010.*

*The Committee will conduct a short inquiry and present recommendations to the Assembly, before the Bill is debated. Committee Chair, Dr Marisa Paterson MLA, said 'the Committee sees value in a public discussion about the proposed Bill's impact on the community, before the Bill is debated in the Assembly'.*

## **COMMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

Weston Creek Community Council offers the following points for consideration.

Weston Creek Community Council (WCCC) agrees with the Committee Chair that a public discussion about the impact of the proposed Bill would be valuable. However, Council considers the introduction of this Bill to be premature. While the referral to the Committee will allow for some public input, we do not regard this timeframe to be sufficient considering the wide-ranging implications on how the community heats their homes and cooks their food or how local businesses can assess the impacts on them.

Unfortunately, the Terms of Reference do not offer sufficient information or guidance to the community to offer considered input. On a quick reading of the suggested Bill, and after hearing some community concerns, further information is needed for beneficial discussion to occur. Concerns include:

- How the policy will guard against unintended consequences of this change, including encouraging the use of wood fires which are a scientifically proven to emit toxic pollutants in the suburbs
- Full consultation is required along with timeframes, costings, and an understanding of the ramifications of "off the cuff" and hurried decision making
- Mention is made of implementing measures to meet the targets. No targets are listed.
- The points made of gas alterations to existing premises needs clarification - including extensions, maintenance, and replacement of parts
- No other alternatives are offered
- A transition period would be required
- Additional costs to homes and businesses needs to be investigated

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- ❖ Further community consultation, including information sessions be made available
- ❖ After additional information is provided, the Committee be reconvened and a revised timeline for comment issued

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input on the *Inquiry into Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Natural Gas Transition) Amendment Bill 2022*.

As a priority, Weston Creek Community Council has broadened the areas and fields of its community consultation to best express the views of a wide range of groups. We believe that our consistent and ongoing consultation with the community through our surveys, public meetings (which are also available digitally), social media presence, newsletters and projects have proven to be valuable avenues of people being able to have their say, be listened to and be involved in decision making.

As an active community group, we look forward to participating in any future discussions. We reiterate our open invitation to Government Ministers to address the Weston Creek Community Council at public meetings.

Yours sincerely

Bill Gemmell

Chair, Weston Creek Community Council

